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ABSTRACT

A powerholder may influence a target individual on the basis of reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert, or informational power. To determine the effects of compliance outcome and basis of power on the powerholder-target relationship, 108 undergraduates read six scenarios in which a powerholder influenced a target. An expected interaction between type of outcome and power base was not found, although main effects were found for each. Subjects perceived more possibility for future use of power, less surveillance necessary, more attraction to the powerholder by target, and more private acceptance of the target following positive rather than negative outcomes. Since the means for outcome were more highly differentiated than those for the power bases, it appears that outcome is a stronger determinant of the powerholder-target relationship than power bases. (JAC)

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Effects of Compliance Outcome and Basis of Power
on the Powerholder-Target Relationship

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A powerholder may influence a target on the basis of reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert, or informational power (French & Raven, 1959; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970). Although past research has shown that these power bases differentially affect the powerholder-target relationship, a factor heretofore neglected has been the outcome the target receives subsequent to compliance with the powerholder's demands. To determine the effects of compliance outcome and basis of power on the powerholder-target relationship, 108 undergraduates each read six scenarios in which a powerholder influenced a target by using a different one of the French and Raven (1959) bases of social power. Compliance resulted either in all positive, all negative, or else, all unknown outcomes for the target person across the six influence attempts. These manipulations comprised the 18 cells of a 6 x 3 (power base x outcome) mixed factorial design.

Although an expected interaction between type of outcome and power base was not found, main effects were obtained for each. Specifically, subjects perceived more possibility for future use of power ($p<.001$), less surveillance necessary ($p<.001$), more attraction to powerholder by target ($p<.001$), and more private acceptance by target ($p<.01$) following positive rather than negative

outcomes. In each case, means for the unknown outcomes fell in between. Main effects for power base on these aspects of the powerholder-target relationship were accounted for primarily by coercive power, with this mean significantly lower than those of the other bases. Attributions of causality and responsibility for the compliance outcome were unaffected by power base, although higher causality was attributed to the target when outcomes were positive rather than negative ($p<.05$).

The results are discussed in terms of the neglect of outcome specification in past research on the bases of social power. In particular, since the means for outcome were more highly differentiated than those for the power bases on each of the dependent variables, it appears that outcome is a stronger determinant of the powerholder-target relationship than are the power bases themselves.

Table 1

Predicted Effects of Power Bases on the

Powerholder-Target Relationship

Power base	P's future use of power	Necessity for P to maintain surveillance	T's attraction for P	T's Private acceptance
Coercive	no	yes	no	no
Reward	yes	yes	yes	no?
Legitimate	yes	no	neutral	yes
Referent	yes	no	yes	yes
Expert	yes	no	neutral	yes
Information	yes	no	?	yes

Note: Predictions derived from French and Raven (1959) and Raven and Kruglanski (1970).

Table 2

Mean Ratings of the Major Dependent Variables

Variable	Outcome	Power base						
		Coercive	Reward	Legitimate	Referent	Expert	Information	Totals
P's Future use of power	Positive	4.3	5.0	4.6	5.1	5.0	5.0	4.8
	Unknown	3.1	3.8	4.2	4.4	4.6	4.9	4.2
	Negative	2.4	3.1	2.7	3.4	2.9	3.2	3.0
	Totals	3.3	4.0	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.4	
Surveillance	Positive	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	4.4	3.6
	Unknown	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.8	3.0	3.1	2.6
	Negative	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.3	1.9
	Totals	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.7	2.9	3.3	
T's Attraction for P	Positive	4.3	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.4	4.9	4.9
	Unknown	3.3	4.1	4.0	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.2
	Negative	3.0	3.5	3.2	4.3	3.6	3.7	3.6
	Totals	3.5	4.2	4.0	4.7	4.5	4.5	
Private acceptance	Positive	2.7	3.8	4.0	3.8	4.4	4.6	3.9
	Unknown	2.4	2.8	2.6	3.4	4.1	3.7	3.2
	Negative	2.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.1
	Totals	2.5	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.9	3.9	

Note.-- Higher values indicate more future use of power, less surveillance (scored inversely), more attraction, and more private acceptance on a scale from 1 - 7.

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